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THE VISITING NURSE DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF

HARRIET FULMER

SUMMER CARE OF BABIES IN NEW YORK CITY

THE summer corps work this year has been gone into much more thoroughly than in the past. The various organizations working for the welfare of babies held a conference early in the year and discussed plans for the summer work. The result was that the city was divided into districts and a nurse assigned to each. Care was taken that there should be no overlapping of service.

The Department of Health provided sixty nurses; the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, ten; Greenwich House, one.

Printed circulars, with suggestions in reference to general conditions, were freely distributed, as well as those with detailed instructions. The nurses were given the names and addresses of all babies whose births had been recorded within the previous three months and they were instructed to visit such baby and mother and find out exactly how the baby was cared for. In each case whatever instructions seemed necessary were given by the nurse. Revisits were made to see if instructions were carried out. The following questions were asked:

Physician or midwife at birth? Conditions of mother? Ophthalmia?

Breast Feeding.—Number and regularity of feedings; diet of mother.

Artificial Feeding.—Kind and condition of food; ice; source of milk supply; milk, how prepared; cleanliness of bottle and nipple; number of feedings, twenty-four hours; amount of each.

General Conditions.—Health and weight of baby; frequency and kind of bathing; employment of mother; who cares for baby daytime; cleanliness of rooms; number and kind of outings.

All cases of destitution were referred at once to the proper relief society. Lists of milk depots and children's aid societies were also given out. Several of the milk depots provided nurses who gave instructions to the mothers receiving milk, and lectures were also given by physicians twice a week, a record being kept of all babies fed on the prepared milk.

The work is still going on and new developments are looked for.

LINA L. ROGERS, R.N.